### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets

Form 10-900a). Type all entries.					
1. Name of Property					
historic name Blakeslee Mo	tor Company Bu	ilding	125	-267	0-0157
other names/site number Same					
2. Location					
street & number 211 West Myrtle					for publication
city, town Independence				vici	
state Kansas code	KS county	Montgomery	code	125	zip code 67301
3. Classification					In the December
	Category of Property	'			vithin Property
X private	Y building(s)		Contributing		contributing
public-local	district		1		buildings
public-State	site				sites
public-Federal	structure				structures
5 39 140	object			-	objects
			1		Total
Name of related multiple property listing:					resources previously
N/A			listed in the	National Re	egister 0
4. State/Federal Agency Certificati	00				
In my opinion, the property meets Signature of certifying official Kansas State Historical So State or Federal agency and bureau  In my opinion, the property meets Signature of commenting or other official	ate Historic F	reservation	Officer	See continua	11y 12, 1989
State or Federal agency and bureau					
5. National Park Service Certificati	ion				
I, hereby, certify that this property is:					
entered in the National Register.					
See continuation sheet.		1.0			
determined eligible for the National					
Register. See continuation sheet.					
determined not eligible for the					
National Register.					
removed from the National Register.					
other, (explain:)	***************************************				-
U ottier, (expiair.)	-				
		Signature of the	Keeper		Date of Action

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  Commerce/Trade: Specialty Store  Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
foundation Concrete		
walls Brick		
roof Asphalt		
other Wood		
Terra Cotta		

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Blakeslee Motor Company Building (1918) is located at 211 West Myrtle in Independence, Montgomery County, Kansas (pop. 10,598). This rectangular brick two-story flat-roofed commercial building has Classical Revival detailing. It stands on the west side of the town's central business district. The main three-bay facade faces Myrtle Street to the north. The structure is approximately 50 feet wide and 140 feet long. The Motor Company building retains substantial exterior and interior architectural integrity.

The interior is divided into three main areas with a plan based on the original function as an automobile agency. While the front showroom and rear garage are common features of this property type, the showroom mezzanine and second floor storeroom distinguish the Blakeslee building from other simpler examples. The front and rear sections are separated by transverse partition walls. There are two side stairways to the mezzanine between the mezzanine and storeroom. Both the garage and storeroom have two longitudinal rows of iron columns supporting the ceiling and roof. Originally, there was an elevator from the lower garage to the storeroom; this features was removed c. 1930.

The Motor Company building has a concrete foundation, brick walls with limestone and terra cotta ornamentation, and a flat built-up asphalt roof behind parapet walls. The main north and east facades are constructed of brown wire-cut brick laid in running bond. The west and rear walls are common red brick laid in header bond with six stretcher courses.

The main building facade is divided into three regular bays. A modern metal entrance door is centered in the middle bay. There are modern metal-covered bulkheads and three overhead lights in this bay. A multi-pane woodframe transom with three sections surmounts the entrance. One of the original iron fixtures for an entrance light remains projecting from the west pier. In the flanking bays there are smooth-cut stone bulkheads, two display windows, a woodframe lintel, and 60-light wood transoms. The pier bases are smooth-cut stone and small stone blocks

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ornament the piers. A gold molded terra cotta belt course crowns the transom row. There is a central terra cotta sign with "Motor-Cars" in raised letters above the entrance. A raised brick belt course and a projecting terra cotta cornice accent the eave. The cornice has a widely spaced dentil molding. There is a terra cotta cap on the parapet wall.

The ornamental treatment of the main facade extends around the northeast side of the building for two bays. A display window in the south bay has been filled with brick. There are two small windows next to these bays. A square brick flue is located in the east sidewall between the front and rear sections of the building. Two rows of six large windows in the east wall light the rear of the building. These have smooth-cut stone sills. The first floor opening to the north in this row has been filled with brick. Second floor windows are covered with white corrugate metal.

In the rear wall a central wooden garage door is flanked by two large windows. There are three windows on the second floor. All rear windows are covered with metal. The entire west wall of the building is blank. It has a stepped parapet in three sections.

The most significant feature of the building's interior is the two-story showroom. This room has an ornamental black and white tile floor with white tile base. The east third of this floor has been covered with modern asphalt tile. The lower half of the engaged piers in the showroom are covered with mottled green tile. The exterior walls are plastered. The ceiling is separated into six panels by intersecting beams. An elaborately ornamented pressed metal ceiling covers the beams and panels. Each panel had a suspended light fixture on a chain. The original fixtures have been replaced with modern fluorescent lights. There is stained wood trim around the display windows, under the mezzanine, and on the stairs. Each stairway has two flights at right angles with an intermediate landing. A small bathroom is located under the east stairway. A modern woodframe office has been constructed in the southeast corner of the showroom.

Modern fiberboard partitions enclose the two east bays of the mezzanine. A pipe railing extends along the top of the original mezzanine wall. The mezzanine and second floor showroom have narrow oak flooring. There are three rooms between the mezzanine and the storeroom in the rear.

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This configuration may date from the bowling alley/dance hall of the 1930s. The mezzanine and rooms have triple stepped oak baseboard and casing. The east room has a 10-light stained oak door and bathroom fixtures. A similar door to the west has been moved to an opening in the modern partition blocking the center of the mezzanine. A 6/6 double-hung wooden window remains in the second floor opening of the east wall. The central and northwest rooms have light woodframe walls of plaster on wire screen.

Two rows of five iron columns in the storeroom support the building roof. A sprinkler system with exposed piping is suspended from the ceiling. There are paired 12/12 double-hung wooden windows in the east and south wall openings.

At the rear of the showroom a wide central opening leads to the garage. There is a wooden ramp from the showroom to the lower garage. A modern woodframe storage room has been constructed in the northeast corner of the garage. The second floor rests on steel I-beams supported on two rows of five iron columns. The garage is divided into three bays by these columns. There is a concrete floor and plastered exterior walls. Some areas of the rear wall have damaged plaster. The ceiling is fiberboard with wooden battens. A sprinkler system with exposed piping is suspended from the ceiling.

The Blakeslee Motor Company building has excellent exterior and interior architectural integrity. It appears today much as it did when completed in 1918. The building is slightly deteriorated, but is in good structural condition. Almost all alterations are minor. Where the original plan and details are obscured by modern construction, these changes could be reversed in a certified rehabilitation. The building is architecturally significant as a well preserved example of an early twentieth century auto salesroom.

8. Statement of Significance			
Certifying official has considered the	significance of this prop	erty in relation to other properties: statewide \( \text{X} \) locally	
Applicable National Register Criteria	ХА ДВ ХС	D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	□А □В □С	D E F G	
Areas of Significance (enter categorie Architecture	s from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Commerce		1918-1926	
		Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person N/A	3.	Architect/Builder Unknown	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Blakeslee Motor Company and Building (1918) Independence, is being nominated to the National Register under criterion A for its historical association with the local development of automobile sales and service. The property is also significant under criterion C as a distinctive example of an early twentieth century auto salesroom. When Barton Blakeslee moved into the building, a local newspaper concluded that "this building will be a model in its line for years to come." Compared with several other structures constructed for auto dealers during this period, the Blakeslee building is the best example of this type in downtown Independence because of its original design and architectural integrity.

The Independence Motor Company acquired the property where the Blakeslee building stands October 18, 1917. The South Kansas Tribune announced that "Barton Blakeslee, the Hudson auto dealer, has purchased the Henry Baden property west of the post office and will build an up-to-date auto salesroom." One week later the planned building was described and the article mentioned that the foundation would be strong enough to carry added stories as business demands. Construction did not begin until 1918. The Tribune January 2 reported that the residence west of the post office was being moved. "The old site will be converted into a modern automobile salesroom for Barton Blakeslee, who has made a fine success in the Carl-Leon annex." The annex referred to was located across Myrtle Street from the new building site.

A related news item in the <u>Tribune March 20</u>, 1918 pointed out that Jake Moore was remodeling his livery stable, the Hotel de Hoss, into an auto garage. "He has reduced his livery stock to a meagerly third of his former outfit, and it is only a short time until there will be no business for those. The demand is for speed." Barton Blakeslee profited from the demand for automobiles and the Motor Company building was evidence of his success.

The building was completed by June 12, 1918 when the <u>Tribune</u> announced that Blakeslee was moving into his new auto sales building, just west X See continuation sheet

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of the post office. According to the newspaper:

"Mr. Blakeslee has built up a wonderful business in the last six years, and has done so by carrying high class cars, such as the Hudson, Cadillac, and Essex cars, with the Acme and Republic trucks and the Cleveland Tractors.

This building and lot costing Mr. Blakeslee something like \$33,000 give him one of the most complete buildings in the state, and he thereby shows his confidence in the future of Independence."

The Blakeslee building represented a distinctive property type designed for auto sales and service. There was a two-story showroom with mezzanine in the front and a second floor storeroom in the rear above a lower service garage. The building's classical exterior detailing was a refined treatment appropriate for the more expensive automobiles offered by Blakeslee. As the Tribune described the building:

"It is built of brown mottled, wire-cut brick with plenty of windows, giving an abundance of light. In size 50 x 140 feet, with salesroom 50 x 50 feet with 21-foot beam ceiling, and tile floor with two wide stairways leading to the Mezzanine floor 16 x 50 for office with private offices near. Both floors and columns being beautifully decorated. In the rear of salesroom the lower floor 50 x 90 feet is for service, and the second floor same size for storage stock, all complete with electric elevator and modern conveniences, such as steam heat, electric lighted, and the Grinnell Automatic Sprinkler system, making it fire proof."

Reportedly, the International "gas buggy" was the first automobile sold in Independence beginning in 1902. The industry grew rapidly in the early years of the twentieth century. Besides the Blakeslee Motor Company, at least four other auto agency buildings from this period remain standing in downtown Independence. The Litchfield and Sawyer garage, a one-story doublefront building at 304-306 N. Penn., was constructed in 1908. The property was not used as an auto agency after 1922. The Independence Motor Car Company with W.W. and J.S. Curtin, proprietors, was built at 301 W. Main about 1912. It is a two-story building with a recessed corner entrance. The property housed an auto agency and service garage until after 1939. Comparable buildings located near the Blakeslee building were the Ernest Brothers Auto Company (1918) at 214-216 W. Main and

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the Arnold Auto Company (c. 1925) at 215-217 W. Main. Both were one-story doublefront buildings with showrooms and rear garages. They housed automobile agencies until after 1939.

Although the Blakeslee building was "a model in its line," the business was not so successful. Blakeslee sold the property October 4, 1926 for \$35,000. He was later listed as an auto dealer at 217 N. 6th in 1929 and at 121 W. Laurel in 1931. The business did not survive the early effects of the depression. The Blakeslee family left Independence sometime between 1931 and 1935.

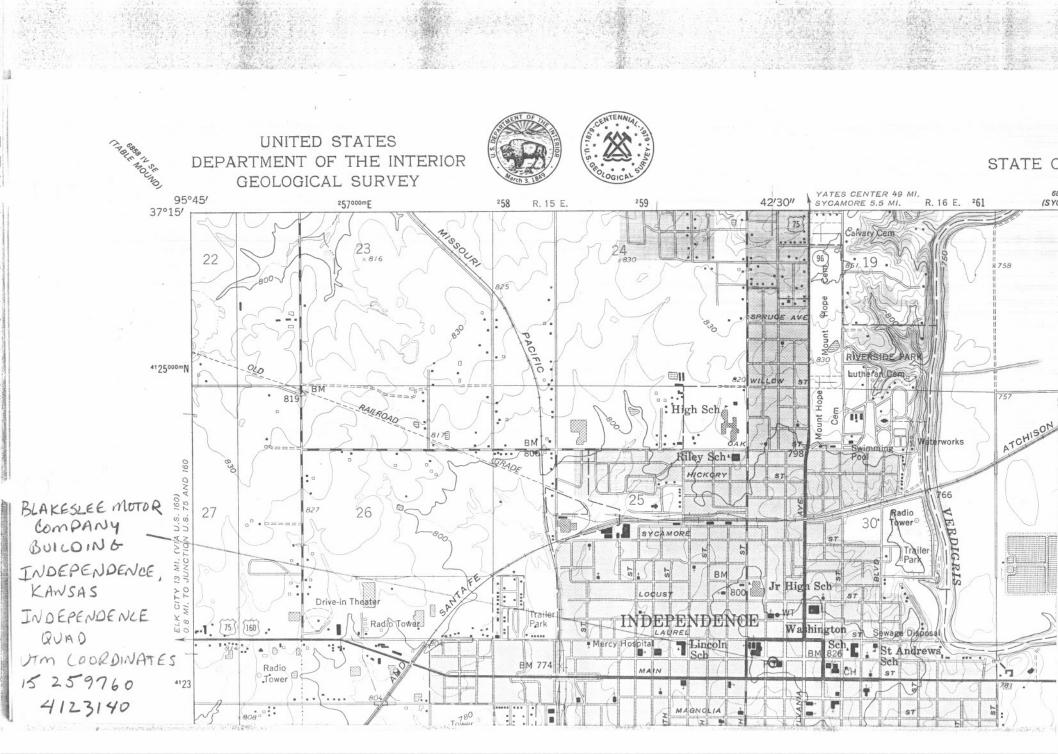
After Blakeslee sold the Motor Company building, another auto dealer George J. Marr, was listed as the building's tenant in 1929. Marr also lived in the building. The property belonged to Mary Shultis, Beatrice Stewart, and Muriel Noonan, heirs of A.W. Shultis. Shultis was a prominent Independence banker and capitalist.

By 1931 the property was occupied by the Plamor Bowling Alley with Wilbert Wilson and William Stotts, proprietors, Sweeby's luncheonette, managed by Morton Rees, and Albion Daggett, a confectioner. These tenants initiated a long period of the building's use as an amusement center. In 1937 and 1939 the property was also listed as the Plamor dance hall. The combined use as a bowling alley and restaurant continued for many years. The property was known as the Plamor until after 1953. In 1957 Cordie and Martha Peterson operated the bowling alley and grill under their name. The present tenant, Tri-State Electrical Supply Company, occupies only the front showroom and the lower rear garage. However, throughout the years of different tenancies the building has retained much of its integrity. Shultis Properties, the partnership which owns the building, plans a rehabilitation for another tenant who would utilize the entire building.

The Blakeslee Motor Company building has significant associations with the local development of automobile sales and service in Independence, Kansas. The building is a distinctive and well-preserved example of an early twentieth century auto sales room. The period of historical significance includes the years from 1918 until 1926 when the property housed the Blakeslee Motor Company. The period of architectural significance is associated with the date of construction, 1918. Compared with other examples of this property type, the Blakeslee building may also have regional or state-wide architectural significance.

	24 - 1010 1057
Independence, Kansas <u>City</u>	Directories, 1912-1957.
	Register of Deeds. Boden-Independence Motor 1. 124:68. Barton Blakeslee and wife Mary Deed. 162:566
	September 1917; 17 October 1917; 21 November; 20 March 1918; 12 June 1918.
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	See continuation sheet
preliminary determination of individual listing has been requested	(36 CFR 67) Primary location of additional data:  X State historic preservation office
previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency
previously determined eligible by the National	
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	University Other
recorded by Historic American Engineering	Specify repository:
Record #	Kansas State Historical Society
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property Less than 1 acre	
UTM References  A 1 5 2 5 9 7 6 0 4 1 2 3 1 4  Zone Easting Northing  C 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Zone Easting Northing
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Roundary Description m	
7500 square feet) compris Kansas. It is bounded on property lines and on the	d property stands on a rectangular tract (approximately ing the west 50 feet of Lot 3, Block 41, Independence, the east, west, and south by the adjacent north by Myrtle Street. The property is located own's central business district.
	See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
The boundary includes all nominated building.	property historically associated with the
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/titleDale Nimz organization	data Tuly 12 1000
street & number P.O. Box 1046	datetelephone _913-842-8992
city or townLawrence	state Kansas zip code 66044
	•

9. Major Bibliographical References



city, town

#### **United States Department of the Interior National Park Service**

#### **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

state

2. Location  street & number		s—complete applicable s		erronns				
2. Location  street & number	1. Nam	ie						
2. Location  street & number 201-209 West Main N/A not for publication  city, town Independence N/Avicinity of Status Category Ownership Dublic Occupied Object Obj	historic Hotel	Booth					-	
city, town Independence N/Avicinity of Status Category Ownership Status Dublic Acquisition Site Structure Site Site Situcture Site Site Site Site Situcture Site Site Site Site Site Site Site Sit	and/or common	Booth Hotel (prefe	rred)	V AND A LOUD OF THE PARTY OF TH				
state Kansas code 20 county Montgomery 67300 code 125  3. Classification  Category Ownership district X private Doth Site Public Acquisition Site Public Acquisition Dobject In process Deing considered N/A work in progress Deing considered N/A military X other: Vacant  4. Owner of Property  name Booth Towers, Inc.  Street & number 810 Ki11 Street  City, town Independence N/Avicinity of state Kansas 67300  Category Ownership Status Present Use agriculture Doth Acquisition Occurithouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds  Street & number Montgomery County Courthouse  City, town Independence State Kansas 67300  Coult N/A State Kansas 67300	2. Loca	ation						
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3. Classification  Category Ownership public	city, town Ind	lependence	N/Avici	nity of				
Category Ownership district      Dublic	state Kansa	ıs code	20	county	Montgomery	67300	co	de 125
district	3. Clas	sification						nazarannen sannestranappi peningscolikum inti i seni anuap
4. Owner of Property  name Booth Towers, Inc.  street & number 810 Hill Street  city, town Independence N/Avicinity of state Kansas 67300  5. Location of Legal Description  courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds  street & number Montgomery County Courthouse  city, town Independence state Kansas  6. Representation in Existing Surveys  title None has this property been determined eligible? — yes x no	building(s) structure site	public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered	occupie x unoccu work in Accessible x yes: res yes: un	pied progress stricted	agricultu commer educatio entertair governn industria	ure cial onal nment nent	park priva religi scien trans	te residence ous ntific portation
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title None has this property been determined eligible?yesXno	city, town Inc	lependence				state	Kansas	
	6. Rep	resentation	in Exis	ting	Surveys			
	title None		h	nas this pro	perty been deter	mined eli	igible?	ves X no
- Total	date N/A							
depository for survey records N/A		urvey records N/A			***			,

#### 7. Description

Condition excellent good	deteriorated	Check one unaltered X altered	Check one _X_ original site moved date
X fair	unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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The Booth Hotel sits at the southwest corner of Main and Eighth streets in downtown Independence. On the southeast corner is the somewhat older four-story Masonic Temple, built a few years earlier by Thomas Jefferson Booth, the man who built the hotel. Most of the other buildings in the immediate vicinity are small commercial structures. The Booth is an imposing five-story structure, its main elevations faced with red paving brick. Its condition has deteriorated over the last few years but it is still structurally sound and still retains its historic character.

The 91 by 111 foot structure is built entirely of reinforced concrete and brick. On the north and east facades a large, solid paving brick was used as facing. On most of the faces the concrete structure is exposed.

The hotel was designed essentially in a "U" plan. Behind the shop at the west end of the north facade a single story section extends to the south. The four stories of rooms above the shop are equipped with sleeping porches that look out to the south over the single story wing. That one-story area running the depth of the building may have been used for storage and receipt of goods.

The decoration on the exterior of the hotel is typical of the period, being classically inspired but understated. The metal entablature between the first and second floors is simply molded. The building's cornice is also metal and is decorated with modillions. The window sills and lintels are concrete, the lintels being cast to resemble rough-cut stone. The transoms of the storefronts at the west end of the north elevation are of prism glass, a very popular material early in this century. The doublehung, one-over-one windows around the lobby have transoms of small square panes of glass.

Inside the Booth its former grandeur is still evident. The first floor held the lobby space, a small room, a large dining room, an enormous kitchen, a coffee shop and small dining area, and two storefront shops which were used most recently as a barber shop and a real estate office.

Decorative plasterwork abounds throughout the first floor. Ceiling medallions for light fixtures vary in ornateness from extremely complex to no more than a simple border. All the rooms have molded cornices with matching work along the ceiling beams. In the small dining area behind the coffee shop the cornice turns into a deep and elaborate entablature. The capitals on the pilasters in the area are composed of human and plant forms. At the tops of pilasters and piers in the lobby and main dining room are scrolled brackets decorated with "B"s.

The floors throughout the first story are finished with mosaic tiles of various patterns. The wainscotting and reception desk are of ceramic tiles that each measure about six by six inches. Originally the stairs going to the second floor were finished with marble and had marble wainscotting. This was removed and sold at auction a couple of years ago. The marble steps and wainscotting remain going down to the basement.

#### 8. Significance

1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 1800-1899	agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settleme	law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation
Specific dates	1912	Builder/Architect Fr	ank Bender	*

#### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Booth Hotel, completed in December, 1911, and formally opened on January 31, 1912, was built by Thomas Jefferson Booth, a very prominant and highly respected citizen of Independence. The hotel is characteristic of the then latest practices in the construction and design of hotels. Booth's architect, Frank Bender, took advantage of the popular material concrete, still relatively new at that time, and made every attempt to construct a completely fireproof building.

T.J. Booth came to the Independence vicinity with his parents in 1870. In 1894, at the age of 38, he moved to Independence and organized the Union Implement and Hardware Company. Shortly thereafter he built the Masonic Temple building for the use of the Masons as well as for his business. This building stands just east of the Booth Hotel. Over the years Booth became involved in the oil business, was president of the First National Bank of Independence, and built and owned many of the commercial structures in the city. A 1918 history of Kansas stated "Mr. Booth is unassuming, and is highly esteemed in Independence. In all his business transactions he has dealt with his fellow man fairly, and for probity of character no man of his resident city is more highly respected than he . . . " Even allowing for the exaggerated writing style of the period, it is apparent that Mr. Booth was a man of some eminence in his community.

The Booth Hotel was hailed at its construction as "the only fireproof hotel in any city near the size of Independence." Fireproofing was, of course, a major concern in an era when devastating fires in cities and towns were commonplace. Built entirely of reinforced concrete, including concrete stairs and sills and lintels, and walls of brick, there was nothing in the support structure that could burn. Inside, the concrete slab floors were covered with mosaic tile on the ground floor and in the basement, and painted on the upper floors. Marble or ceramic tile was used for wainscotting on the ground floor and in the stairwells, and exterior cornices were of metal. The revolving door into the lobby was furnished with break-away doors that would collapse and fold together in case of fire or other emergency.

In addition to the concern about fire, ventilation was a major consideration in the construction of a building such as this. The U-shaped design is well suited to allowing fresh air and natural light into all rooms. Four suites of rooms even had sleeping porches, a feature that was very popular in the early 20th century for its reputed health benefits. Two of the upper floors were provided with large fans in the windows that faced south into the courtyard to assist with air circulation.

The 108 room hotel was equipped with 20 connecting rooms with baths, 25 rooms with private baths and "sufficient baths on all floors for the use of guests of all rooms." At a time when even the biggest hotels were just beginning to provide bathrooms for every two connecting rooms, the facilities at the Booth Hotel were not to be sneered at.

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date entered

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The Booth was regarded as a first class hotel well into the 1950's. In the early 1960's it was finally sold out of the Booth family and has had several owners since that time. Plans are under way now to return the Booth to its former elegance and place of distinction in the community.

THIS STATEMENT IS BASED ON CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

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Continuation sheet

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Page

1

This nomination was completed with the assistance of Ken Brown, Montgomery County Historical Society.

Connelley, William E,, <u>A Standard History of K</u> Lewis Publishing Co., 1918 Theaton, George E., <u>Kansas-Indian Territory</u> Oi	1 & Gas Fields. np: S.N. Francis, 1904.
ndependence Daily Reporter. various issues in	1910, 1911, 1912
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of nominated property less than one acre  Quadrangle name Independence  UTM References	Quadrangle scale 1:24,000
A 1.5 2 5.9 7.0.0 4.1 2.2 8.4.0 Zone Easting Northing  C	Zone Easting Northing  D
Verbal boundary description and justification	
n 1911.	has occupied this site since the construction
List all states and counties for properties overlapping	state or county boundaries
state N/A code cou	nty code
state N/A code cou	nty code
name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Histororganization Kansas State Historical Society  street & number 120 W. 10th Street	date February 28, 1983
city or town Topeka	state Kansas 66612
12. State Historic Preserva	tion Officer Certification
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:	
national stateX local	
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the N 665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the Natio according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Natio	nal Register and certify that it has been evaluated
State Historic Preservation Officer signature	Mill dull
title State Historic Preservation Officer	date March 8, 1983
For NPS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the Nation	and Posicious
Thoroby serving that this property is included in the Nation	
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	uate

9. Major Bibliographical References

# TABLE MOUND

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY





#### STATE O

